REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-15, 17-18, and 20-32 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 1, 4-8, 10, 12-13, 17, 20, 23, 26-29, and 31-32 are amended to more clearly define the invention. Claims 1, 8, 12, 20, and 29 are independent.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during a telephone interview on January 19, 2006. During the telephone conference, Examiner Lum Vannucci agreed that the prior art rejections would be overcome if the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejections were adequately addressed. In this regard, this amendment amends claims 1, 4-8, 10, 12-13, 17, 20, 23, 26-29, and 31-32 to further clarify the features of the claimed invention. While Applicants submit that the subject matter recited by the claims would be clear to one of ordinary skill in the art to allow them to know the metes and bounds of the invention, taking the present Application as a whole, to speed prosecution claims 1, 4-8, 10, 12-13, 17, 20, 23, 26-29, and 31-32 have been amended in accordance with Examiner Lum Vannucci's very helpful suggestions.

In view of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw all rejections.

In particular, the Examiner alleges that backlash is defined as:

> "A sudden violent backward movement or reaction", "the play between adjacent movable parts (as in a series of gears)," "the jar caused by this when the parts are put into action."

The Examiner then alleges that the claims are indefinite because it is unclear how a backlash can be set, when, according to the above definition, backlash appears to have a large random component because the amount of reaction/jarring is inexact.

However, the Examiner appears to have incorrectly understood the meaning of the term backlash.

The Examiner appears to allege that there is a single definition of backlash and that the single definition of backlash includes components of a "sudden violent . . reaction" and a "jarring."

Contrary to the Examiner's allegation, backlash has several meanings. Indeed, the quote that the Examiner provides from a dictionary includes three separate definitions. The Examiner has improperly attempted to combine these three separate definitions into a single definition.

> "[G]eneral meanings gleaned from reference sources, such as dictionaries, must always be compared against the use of the terms in context, and the intrinsic record must always be consulted to identify which of the different possible dictionary meanings is most consistent with the use of the words by the inventor." (M.P.E.P. § 2111.01.II)

In this regard, of the three definitions cited by the Examiner from a dictionary, only the second definition is the definition which is most consistent with the use of the words by the inventor. This correct definition does not include any "large random component" regarding the amount of a "reaction/jarring."

Rather, and in stark contrast, the correct definition in the context of the present application illustrates that a backlash is set in that the backlash is "the play between adjacent movable parts (as in a series of gears)." This "play" does not change during operation or upon experiencing any force, such as, a "reaction/jarring."

Therefore, Applicants' respectfully submit that the term backlash is definite and

request withdrawal of this rejection of the claims.

Further, although not raised in the currently outstanding Office Action, during the telephone interview the Examiner asked about the equation found, for example, in independent claim 8. This feature of claim 8 is supported by the specification at, for example, page 13, lines 5-9, and Figure 5B. This feature provides one exemplary embodiment of the invention which illustrates one exemplary relationship between the gearing angle RA and the backlash. In other words, this equation describes how the backlash may gradually change as the gear angle changes.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, and the Examiner's indication that the prior art rejections are merely maintained because of the issues raised with respect to the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejections, Applicants respectfully submit that 1, 3-10, 12-15, 17-18, and 20-32, all the claims presently pending in the Application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. In particular, Applicants hereby incorporate by reference the traversals of the prior art rejections from the July 7, 2005, Amendment and the Examiner's admission in the September 9, 2005, Office Action, that none of the applied references teaches or suggests a bias portion as recited by the independent claims. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the Application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 2/21/06

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